

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 9th December 2014

Time: 2.00pm – 3.45pm

Present: Councillors D Brown (Vice Chairman), P Brown, S Bywater, P Clapp, D Divine, P Downes, D Giles (substituting for S van de Kerkhove) D Harty, G Kenney, M Leeke, M Loynes, L Nethsingha, T Orgee (substituting for Cllr M Rouse), A Walsh (substituting for F Onasanya), J Whitehead (Chairwoman), J Wisson and F Yeulett;

Apologies: Councillors, F Onasanya (Cllr A Walsh substituting) M Rouse (Cllr T Orgee substituting) S van de Kerkhove (Councillor D Giles substituting) and Mr P Rossi.

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

54. MINUTES 18th NOVEMBER 2014 AND ACTION LOG

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th November 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairwoman subject to the inclusion of Councillors Kenney and Loynes as having been present.

The Action Log was noted including updates e-mailed to Members of the Committee that morning providing the requested information in relation to the actions requested for Minutes 49 and 50.

55. PETITIONS

No petitions had been received.

56. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROPOSED ADJUSTMENTS TO 2015/16 BUSINESS PLANNING PROPOSALS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

The Committee received an update report on the Business Planning process. Section 2 of the report provided an update on the financial overview, setting out the full five years Business Plan savings required, including a breakdown of where the savings had been allocated by Service Block. Section 3 of the report provided details of the Capital Programme update, with Section 3.1 providing a list of the further amendments to the draft programme from that reviewed by Service Committee in September and General Purposes Committee in October.

Section 4 of the report listed the proposals for the use of additional Business Planning funding, with an oral update confirming that the estimate used when preparing the report of an allocation of £2m to be given to Children, Adults and Families had been

subsequently agreed by General Purposes Committee on 2nd December. It was reported that following consultation with the Chairwomen and Vice Chairwoman / man of both the Adults and the Children and Young People Committees, this Committee was being asked to agree the following adjustments totalling £850,000 which had the effect of reducing the original savings required for each of the highest risk areas as set out below.

Children and Young People's Services (2015/16 savings)	Current saving (£k)	Proposed adjustment (£k)
Home to School Transport (mainstream) - <i>A/R.6.601 and A/R.6.602</i>	632	-200
Early Years Place Planning (admissions) - <i>A/R.6.608</i>	713	-60
Looked After Children (LAC) Placements - <i>A/R.6.405</i>	2000	£400k investment to save proposal to secure delivery of the savings target
Recommissioning of Early Help - <i>A/R.6.503</i>	1034	-90
Youth Support Services - <i>A/R.6.504</i>	369	-100
TOTAL CYP services		-850

The officers' report provided the detail of the adjustments. Section 5 set out the impact of savings proposals on the highest risk areas for Children and Young People as had been requested at the previous meeting. Section 6 of the report set out the proposed performance indicators for Children and Young People's Services, with further guidance including how they were to be measured, provided in Appendix A of the report.

Reference was also made to the additional £350k monies earmarked from reserves for delaying the saving to be made to Information, Advice and Guidance Services to help reduce the number of pupils 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEETS). It was highlighted that this sum might not be required, as it was hoped to persuade both the Local Enterprise Partnership to provide funding and for schools to purchase these good quality services from County Council providers, which they had previously received as a free service.

During discussion, Members:

- Asked whether the money shown for 'Early Help' was a permanent addition to this budget going forward for future years. In response it was indicated that this was currently the case, but it was noted that no individual budget could be guaranteed regarding future year savings requirements.
- Asked for clarification on whether the investment to save proposal on 'Looked after Children' to secure delivery of the savings target required to be paid back. In response it was explained that a large part of the savings would be through reducing

expensive out of county accommodation placements, with the monies being provided as a grant as opposed to a repayable loan.

- Asked for an update on whether discussions had commenced with Locality Teams in relation to the future targeted service. It was confirmed these were starting to happen and that Local Members would be invited to take part in discussions on need at the local level. Feedback from partners had included concerns regarding the loss of locality social workers.
- Queried whether more funding was being provided to locality teams in the south of the County compared to the north. In response it was indicated that resources were allocated on the basis of the need identified in the area and as an example it was highlighted that Wisbech received a higher level of funding than an area such as Burwell.
- Expressed concern that reducing funding in areas such as ‘youth work’ would have a long term impact / cost to society that was currently not able to be quantified. A Member asked whether consideration had been given to seeking private investors contributions through schemes such as Social Impact Bonds. In response the Executive Director indicated that officers had looked into these and it was considered that they were more applicable to helping reduce re-offending rates and for Looked After Children, both areas where it was easier to be able to show a measurable outcome.
- Sought clarification of what proportion of the School Transport (Mainstream) Budget’ the referred to “increased pressure of £200k” represented. In response it was explained that the total budget was £13m and that the increase was due to an increasing mobile population, with the omission due to an accounting error. It was confirmed that the increased £200k would remain in the budget, as the aim was to support measures such as establishing more safe school routes, thereby reducing the need to have to provide transport.
- With reference to paragraph 5.10 ‘Home to School Transport to Special Schools’ and the text on the review of the mileage rate, it was highlighted that this contained a typographical error in the sixth line as it referred to the rate was increasing when earlier in the paragraph it was stated it was being reduced. A request was also made to provide details of what the current mileage rate was and what it was being reduced to. **Action: Meredith Teasdale to investigate and provide Spokes with this information.**

In relation to the performance indicators it was moved by the Vice Chairman and seconded by the Chairman to amend the bullet reading “percentage of pupils attending good or outstanding schools” to add the words “to be split between primary and secondary schools and to also include special schools”. This amendment on being put to the vote was unanimously supported.

- In discussion on performance indicators on page 10 fourth bullet reading “Percentage of Year 12 and 13 year olds in participation” there was a request for the word ‘participation’ to be clearly defined in the guidance for this indicator on page 13 in the third bullet reading “part time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for at least 20 hours a week” **Action: Adrian Loades to**

investigate and e-mail the Committee outside of the meeting in relation to the above queries to clarify a definition.

For the record it was highlighted that the whole Committee in agreeing the recommendations to balance the budget, were extremely concerned by the impact of the cuts and were very aware that they would not only result in reductions to services and some redundancies, but in increased workload for those still in post.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) note the update on the Council's overall financial position;
- b) note the remaining milestones in the Business Planning process;
- c) agree the use of additional funding allocated by the General Purposes Committee on 2nd December;
- d) consider and note the impact of the savings proposals on children and young people; and
- e) To note the further detail on the proposed performance indicators for the Business Plan 2015/16 and endorse them with the agreed amendment to the bullet reading "percentage of pupils attending good or outstanding schools" to add "to be split between primary and secondary schools and special schools".

57. FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS POLICY FOR CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER BY CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Committee considered a report on the policy and implications relating to financial contributions for the parents of children and young people looked after by the Council. The proposal to introduce a means tested contributions policy for the parents for Looked After Children was in order that parents shared accountability. This was to be on the basis of their financial circumstances and ability to pay, as detailed in paragraph 5.0 of the policy.

Paragraph 2.10 of the report highlighted that, if introduced, it was not expected that the policy would result in financial savings as there was likely to only be a low number of families eligible to make a contribution (70 to 80) and no contribution would be sought when families were in receipt of certain benefits.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:

- While some of the Members supported the principle of parents contributing to the care of their children where their income was sufficient, there was concerns on both the costs of recoupment, which were not currently identified in the report, as well as the potential stresses of the proposed procedure on both families and staff. It was suggested that these latter non-quantifiable costs, might easily outweigh any potential benefits and that any pilot scheme established, would need to be a carefully monitored. In response the officers highlighted that it was impossible to assess the overall potential cost of administering the scheme, as currently no

assessments had been undertaken and the detail would not be available until the trial period was undertaken. Members were however looking for some form of overall 'best guess' cost estimate.

- Seeking clarification of whether Child Benefits was paid to the parent when a child was admitted to local authority care. In reply it was indicated that the benefits ceased after 56 days when the child was no longer living with parents or those with parental responsibility, however, the local authority cannot receive the child benefit payments for looking after children.
- In relation to paragraph 2.6 stating that "where parents failed to complete their financial assessment and no exemptions applied, that parents could be charged the full cost equivalent age related fostering allowance" Members sought some assurance that before this happened, investigations were undertaken to find out the reasons for non-completion.
- A question was raised in relation to maintenance payments made to a parent and whether these were required to be taken into account in assessments. There was discussion of the issue that if the child was taken into care, maintenance payments would no longer be required, as the parent was no longer responsible for their maintenance, therefore, would not be included in the means assessment.
- One Member expressed concern that there appeared to be no tapering or sliding scale arrangements and therefore potentially no incentive for parents to earn more, if all the extra income earned was taken as part of a child's payments. Currently only the maximum contributions were being shown. This needed to be clarified.
- On paragraph 2.8, reference was made to contribution policies having been adopted by a small, but growing number of other councils, but the report provided limited details to help provide assurance that the scheme had been sufficiently evaluated. As an oral response details were provided of schemes operating in some London Boroughs e.g. Redbridge where there was recognition that the scheme would only apply to a small number of parents. It was also indicated that Staffordshire had abandoned their scheme after a 12 month trial period and that Norfolk County Council have a similar policy, but it had rarely been used.
- Some Members queried the reality of the examples of financial assessments set out in appendix 1 of the policy in terms of the amount shown for water rates, Council tax etc. In response it was cautioned that these could only ever be broadly illustrative examples, as all assessments would be unique to the financial circumstances of the individual parent.

While it was noted that the implementation target date was given as April 2015 the report talked about initially trialling the scheme for 12 months, with a six month review to assess viability. Members after considerable debate considered that they did not have sufficient detail to agree the Policy. The Chairwoman therefore moved an amendment which was seconded by the Vice-Chairman and on being put to the vote:

It was resolved by a clear majority:

To defer the report and to receive a more detailed revised report at the next meeting in relation to the issues raised in debate included in the minutes.

58. **EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Committee received a report on the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy for Children and Young People. The Strategy intended to provide a collective vision of intervention for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to support the leadership and direction required to address the emotional and mental health needs of children and young people over the next two years within a context of reduced funding and resources. The Strategy also sought to maximise the use of available key partner resources, to improve outcomes for children and young people and their families.

It was explained that the Strategy did not directly impact on any Council budget, but was intended to influence the Council in the decisions to be made when commissioning services. As it was a holistic overarching Strategy for all partners, there was no intention to define the Local Authority role in Mental Health.

The report provided details of the consultation exercise carried out with the feedback from stakeholders reflected in the final Strategy included as Appendix 1 to the report. It set the priorities for promoting and improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health for children and young people in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and requires action from partners commissioning and providing services. The areas for action were listed in paragraph 2.1 of the report.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:

- The Vice Chairman highlighted that on page 28 under the section 'Vulnerable Groups' the last bullet point on the page referred to December 2012 statistics in relation to the number of Children on the 'Child Protection Register'. He requested that the Strategy was updated to include more up to date statistics. **Action Meredith Teasdale undertook to ensure the Strategy was updated for the most up to date statistics.**
- The Chairwoman speaking on behalf of Councillor van de Kerkhove, who had been unable to attend, drew attention to the need for the Strategy to specifically make reference to 'Transition' arrangements for the continued support required when a child changed to adult status. **Meredith Teasdale undertook to ensure the Strategy was updated to make specific reference to Transitions arrangements.**
- The Chairwoman making reference to the statistics of the number of children with mental health disorders as detailed on pages 32 and 33 of the Strategy document, was concerned that the disorder figures set out did not provide enough information of the very wide range of behavioural issues without providing more detail on their severity of the condition. She suggested more work needed to be carried out to clarify how officers differentiated between different types of emotional disorder need, to clarify where expert medical intervention was required.

- One Member asked why the Strategy excluded 16-19 year olds with psychosis, as this was an area which resulted in a great deal of expenditure. Officers agreed to check the reason why this had not been included in the Strategy.
Action: Meredith Teasdale
- Another concern expressed was the lack of explanation of some of the terms used in the Strategy e.g. Hyperkinetic Disorder. Officers undertook to ensure that the final version of the Strategy included a glossary of key medical / technical terms. **Action: Meredith Teasdale**
- There was also a request for information to be provided in the e-mail already requested on the County Council's responsibilities in relation to actioning the Strategy **Action: Meredith Teasdale to arrange an e-mail to be sent to the Committee setting out the Council's responsibilities.**

It was resolved unanimously to:

Support the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy for Children and Young People.

59. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER UPDATE

The Committee received a report on the risk management approach operated by the Council at corporate and directorate levels and providing details in the following appendices:

- Risk Management Policy (Appendix 1)
- Risk Scoring Matrix (Appendix 2)
- The Children, Families and Adults Services (CFA) Risk Register (Appendix 3)

It was explained that the approach sought to identify any key risks which might prevent the Council's priorities from being successfully achieved. It was highlighted in relation to the CFA Directorate Risk Register that there were currently 15 directorate risks, none of which were at red residual level, with the Register at Appendix 3 of the report also illustrating for each risk the actions that were planned to ensure the risk remained within the Council's defined risk appetite. The risks with the highest residual scores were highlighted as being:

- Failure of the Council's arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable children and adults
- Lack of capacity to respond to rising demand for service provision
- Care homes unable to accept local authority-funded residents
- Failure to meet performance targets.

It was explained that some of the columns were not fully completed as the red, amber and green rating for some risks was still being looked at with work ongoing.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:

- Asking how often they were reviewed, especially those with a high risk rating. In response it was explained that a formal report would come back to the Committee every six months but that regular monitoring of the corporate risks was undertaken by Strategic Management Team, and the CFA Directorate and other Directorates also regularly reviewed their own registers, updating them where required.
- One Member queried whether ‘failure to meet performance targets’ was appropriate to be classed as one being one of the four highest residual risks, pointing out that the Council regularly failed to meet performance targets. In response it was clarified that this risk was on the overall performance of the Directorate, as it was accepted that some targets would fail to be met, especially when those set had been particularly ambitious.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Consider the risk register and the actions being taken to mitigate risks.

60. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Members received the agenda plan for the Children and Young People Committee, and noted changes that had been made since publication. In discussion officers were asked to try to avoid reports being included on the reserve dates in February and April.

It was resolved:

- a) to note the agenda plan, including the updates reported orally at the meeting as follows:

adding to the March agenda:

- Multi Systemic Therapy (MST) Mutual (Tom Jefford) (key decision)
- Phase II – Together for Families (Lorraine Lofting/Alison Smith)
- Noting that on the March agenda “Changes to School catchment areas” had incorrectly been added with “Service charges to Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) providers” and required deletion as there was already a separate entry for “Changes to School catchment areas”.

Moving from the April to May agenda:

- Policy for the establishment of new denominational schools and
 - (ii) Early Years Policy
- b) to agree that the information report titled ‘London Road Hartson - provision for disabled children’ currently included on the reserve date of 28th April would now be e-mailed to the Committee as opposed to having to bring it forward to the reserve date meeting in February.

Chairwoman